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OLC 72-0805

14 July 1972

MEMOR	VALLALIA V	FOR THE	DECODD
TATE: TAT CL		FOR THE	RRGORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with Ed Braswell re Laos Ceiling

We said we were confused as to	f Counsel, Senate Armed Services Committee.  the basis of the decision to cut the  We said that such a cut might  e U.S. program in Laos for FY 1973. In  following points:
a. The Committee Authorization bill with	has reported out the Defense Procurement  Symington ceiling for Laos.
accepted by the Commit	proposed by Senator Symington and tee with the full understanding that it ar-related expenditures including both
military and economic a	id, i.e., the was substituted
for the original request tration.	proposed by the Adminis-
nobody in the Administra clearly on the importance	ed that the Committee's problem was that ation seemed able or willing to speak up see of a higher ceiling. He also complained ment had not been candid with the Committee.
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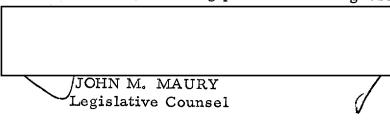
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- d. In these circumstances, Braswell saw no hope that anyone in the Committee would be willing to reopen the matter on the floor and push for a higher ceiling. He did comment, however, that if we wanted to pursue this possibility the place to start would be to try to persuade Symington himself to reconsider and accept a higher ceiling.
- e. When asked the possibility of getting the ceiling raised in conference, Braswell said he couldn't predict anything in this regard.
- f. Braswell repeated several times that the real problem was that there was "no one in charge" of the Laos problem--DOD doesn't seem particularly interested and the State Department has been ambivalent. On another occasion he commented that "the Administration is hiding" on Laos.

g. Braswell voiced the per	sonal opinion that the Administration
could "live with" the	ceiling since its earlier requests
had been inflated.	

2. In conclusion, Braswell said that the only other course open to us was to try to get the White House to make a strong pitch to the Congress.



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